

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 AID-05

IO-13 /071 W

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R 170900Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6786

INFO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMCONSUL MEDAN

AMCONSUL SURABAYA

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 12226

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM ID

SUBJECT: DUTCH JOURNALIST VISITS DETAINEES ON BARU ISLAND

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. ACCORDING TO ANTARA NEWS AGENCY REPORT SEPT 15, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT ROBERT KROON OF DUTCH TELEVISION NETWORK TELEVISIE AND RADIO OMROEP STICHTING STATED AFTER 4-DAY VISIT TO BURU ISLAND THAT POLITICAL DETAINEES THERE ARE NOT LIVING IN A CONCENTRATION CAMP BUT ARE GOING THROUGH A PERIOD OF MENTAL REHABILITATION. THEY HAVE SUCCEEDED RELATIVELY WELL IN THEIR AGRICULTURAL ENDEAVORS, SAID KROON, AND TWO-THIRDS OF THE ISLAND HAS NOW BEEN TURNED INTO ARABLE LAND. HE FORESAW TOUGH JOB AHEAD FOR GOI IN SETTLING ISSUE OF CATEGORY B DETAINEES IN GENERAL, HOWEVER.

2. COMMENTING ON LIVING CONDITIONS ON BURU, KROON SAID MEDICAL CARE - ONE DOCTOR FOR EVERY 1,000 INHABITANTS - WAS BETTER THAN IN HOLLAND, FOOD WAS PLENTIFUL, AND EVERYONE LOOKED HEALTHY. HE NOTED THAT EVERYONE WAS GIVEN OPPORTUNITY TO WORSHIP IN MOSQUES AND CHURCHES, AND EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT ONLY ONE BATTALION WAS MAINTAINING

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SECURITY ON THE ISLAND AND IT WAS "ALMOST UNNOTICEABLE." END

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3. KRRON CALLED EMBASSY PRESS OFFICIER SEPT 15 TO DISCUSS VISIT. HE SAID VISIT WAS ARRANGED BY KOPKAMTIB CHIEF OF STAFF ADM SUDONO IN RESPONSE TO REQUEST BY KROON A FEW MONTHS AGO. HE TOOK FILMS FOR SPECIAL 50-MINUTE PROGRAM ON DUTCH TV, AND SAID AMERICAN NETWORK HAD PURCHASED RIGHTS FOR SHOWING IN US BUT HE DID NOT KNOW DETAILS. KROON CONFIRMED THAT DETAINEES ON BURU (WHICH HE SAID NUMBERED 12-13,000) WERE LIVING WELL, APPEARED HEALTHY, AND SEEMED HAVE SURPRISING HIGH MORALE. HE SAID HE AND HIS TEAM WERE GIVEN COMPLETE FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND COULD TALK PRIVATELY TO DETAINEES. KROON ALSO SAID SUDOMO HAD INDICATED TO HIM THAT BURU DETAINEES ARE THERE TO STAY, SINCE GOI CONSIDERS THEM PART OF THE TRANSMIGRATION PROGRAM AND SEES NO POINT IN BRINGIN PEOPLE BACK TO JAVA FROM BURU WHEN IT WOULD LIKE TO RESETTLE ONE MILLION JAVANESE ANNUALLY ON BURU IF POSSIBLE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DETENTION, JOURNALISTS, POLITICAL PRISONERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976JAKART12226
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760352-0605
From: JAKARTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760950/aaaabqgw.tel
Line Count: 81
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 OCT 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <31 OCT 2003 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <27 AUG 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DUTCH JOURNALIST VISITS DETAINEES ON BARU ISLAND BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED
TAGS: SHUM, ID, NL, (KROON, ROBERT)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006